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NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests and Range

B.C. FIRE CREWS HEAD TO MANITOBA

VICTORIA – British Columbia is sending 22 fire personnel to Thompson, Manitoba to help that province's crews respond to two large fires and prepare for dry lightning expected later this week, Forests and Range Minister Rich Coleman announced today.

"Manitoba is currently battling two large fires in the northeast near Thompson," said Coleman. "With a continued outlook for hot, dry conditions and more lightning, we're pleased to be able to provide assistance."

Staff being deployed for up to 19 days include seven three-person initial attack crews, who will be dispatched to new or smaller fires, and one officer to co-ordinate the crew's activities while out of province. B.C. crews are being sent from the Coastal, Cariboo and Prince George fire centres where the fire danger ratings remain generally low. Sufficient resources will remain in B.C. should fire activity increase.

This is the sixth deployment of British Columbia fire crews this year, with 389 crew members sent to the Yukon, Alaska and Quebec in June, and 205 crew members sent to Quebec and Ontario in May. Canadian deployments are co-ordinated through the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Centre (CIFFC) with costs being paid by the requesting provinces. Crews were sent to Alaska through the Northwest Wildland Fire Protection Agreement.

The public reports nearly half of all wildfires in B.C. Please continue to report smoke and flames by calling toll-free 1-800-663-5555 or *5555 on most cellular networks.

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Note to media: Government of Manitoba's Conservation Fire Program website:
www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/fire/index.html

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